

F106

B114

1877

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 113 497 8



F 106
.B114
Copy 1

THREE WEEKS IN AMERICA.

1877.

THE LIBRARY
OF CONGRESS

BY R. H. B.

MDCCLXXVIII.

FILE
B/4

УРАЛСИБ
22390400 70

THREE WEEKS IN AMERICA.

CALLED in the course of duty to proceed to England, in the summer of 1877, by way of New York, from the island of Jamaica, I was pleased to find in Captain Low, who commanded the steamer "Atlas," an Aberdonian by connection and regard, though I believe, to speak strictly, a native of Montrose. It gives me much pleasure to record here the tact and courtesy to which his passengers were indebted for a pleasant passage to their destination, New York. And it may interest those of your readers who are acquainted with him to hear, from one who has experienced his attentions, that of the line of steamers to which he belongs none is better esteemed than the commander of the "Atlas."

NEW YORK.

The approach from Sandyhook to the city is through one of the grandest harbours in the world, on the waters of which move some of the finest vessels which the combined mercantile marines of the Old and New Worlds can show. As we move up we pass Atlantic steamers of 3,000 tons and upwards, of German, French, and British nationalities, hundreds of coasting vessels; and the waters are dotted here, there, everywhere with ferry steamers of shape and size which we in Great Britain can show no match for—the famed "Iona," of Clyde fame, known to all who have seen our western coast, would be absolutely nowhere on the New York Water. There must be upwards of one hundred far larger steamers employed in the local traffic there; and were I asked what my principal impression carried home from New York was, I would at once reply, "river steamboats."

The shores of New Jersey and Long Island, which enclose the harbour, are lined with residences very much as are the banks of the Clyde below Greenock, and to these retreats, and others much further off, hurries the busy New York world after business hours. Most of your readers will know that the city stands on the island of Manhattan, which is one day to be covered by the city proper. This island is but two miles broad, and is some twenty miles long. For some six of these miles it is covered with blocks of buildings, many of them of the hugest size. The buildings which strike you most on approaching the wharves are those of certain insurance companies and the offices of some of the newspapers, which have been run up with that object of course.

During the two hours' steam from Sandyhook we have, as I have said, been pushing on past steamers of every shape, and as we near our wharf we note particularly the ferry steamers which run across the Hudson River, which washes one shore of the city, and the East River, which on the other side separates it from Brooklyn. These vessels are of the most novel construction, capable of carrying twenty carriages or waggons and pair, and, besides, of accommodating perhaps 2,000 passengers, and often their capabilities are tested to the full. The fare is usually five cents or twopence halfpenny; and here let me remark on the utter disregard for thrift of the average American. The above is literally the smallest sum ever quoted amongst even the poorest. The newsboy who buys his paper at the rate of $2\frac{1}{2}$ cents will no more think of letting you have one for less than double that amount than he would give it for nothing. The price marked on the *New York Herald*, say, is three cents, but it is absolutely impossible to get them at that price—one is compelled to pay five. I tested this point at Saratoga, the fashionable American resort, where in early morning I was strolling about, and many newspaper boys were hawking their papers. I determined to try one of them, and offered him four cents. But not a bit of it; he scorned the offer, and stuck out for his *fair trade return* of cent per cent!

Hotel life in America is so often spoken of by travellers that it deserves mention. That Americans themselves have found disadvantages in their system is evidenced by the advertisements which are so frequent, that this and that hotel is conducted on the

European plan, *i.e.*, you pay, as with us, for your rooms, and pay for meals only as you order them. That seems a common-sense arrangement, and yet I much doubt whether, if one is under no necessity to be economical, the American plan is not, on the whole pleasanter. According to that, you pay from five dollars to three-and-a-half dollars a day, and for that get your room and meals inclusive. The furniture of these hotels is gorgeous, indeed, painfully so. I heard a distinguished American senator make an invidious comparison between European and American hotels, and speak of the latter as palaces. All I can say is that I prefer to reside in a house rather than a palace, and, given cleanliness and comfort, I willingly resign to royalty the palaces.

But in America is not every man a king unto himself? so perhaps it's all right that the palace should be awaiting him. The bill of fare of an hotel, such as the Fifth Avenue, is a marvel to an outsider, embracing every imaginable comestible cooked in every variety. The servants are plentiful and attentive, and I doubt whether you can dine anywhere in such comfort as at the ordinary New York hotel. The use of ice is a notable feature in their management, and I venture to suggest, for the consideration of those interested in the temperance cause, whether an advance in the use of iced water, iced soda-water, and other refreshing and non-intoxicating liquors is not deserving their attention. In America, at an hotel, it is the exception to see wine or any drinkable but iced water, tea, or coffee on the table. No one is expected to drink, as in this country, for "the good of the house," and directly you sit down to table at breakfast or dinner the waiter at once places before you a glass of the most delicious iced water, as a matter of course. Nothing is more noticeable to the English traveller than this abstinence, and yet the wine is to be had if required, and of good quality, though usually of high price. Custom is against the hotel-keeper in Great Britain starting on this footing, but I venture to say it would be a success with anyone bold enough to try it. Our supplies of ice are limited and difficult to obtain, but the demand would bring the supply in its train; and when I say that even in New York artificial ice is in use, when their supply of the natural article is so infinitely superior, and that at Jamaica artificial ice was selling at a penny a pound, it will be seen that there is no great question of expense to face, and that

the advantages to be gained from its free use in household management only require appreciation to cause the demand to rise.

Every New Yorker has "Our Broadway" on the tip of his tongue, if you speak of his city to him, and yet be it confessed that I was sadly disappointed with that far-famed thoroughfare. Extending as it does through the whole length of the city, its very length is a striking feature, but that a walk down Broadway can be compared in variety of sights to that which may be got in walking, say, from Charing Cross to the Mansion-House, in London, is absurd. You pass many huge buildings in Broadway, and a few really handsome ones, but the shops are not to be compared as to their exterior show—the interiors I had little occasion to explore.

Tramways, or street railways as Americans call them, form a most important feature in the aspect of New York life. Without them I know not what the visitor to New York would do. Anything more vile than the state of the streets, as to paving, and the scavenger's work, it would be impossible to conceive. We, in Aberdeen, abuse our authorities for the state of some of our causewaying—King Street, for instance, is not over good for carriage springs or tires, and yet King Street would be esteemed by New Yorkers the smoothest of travelling by the side of almost any of their main thoroughfares. I was told that this was one of the results of Boss Tweed's rascality. The money ostensibly devoted to such works was disposed of by that worthy and his friends, and the city is to-day so deeply indebted as to be unable to afford to do the proper municipal duties. This, it may be assumed, disposes one to driving rather than walking, and there are few parts of the city which cannot be reached by means of the street cars, or what is termed the Elevated Railway, which is nothing less than a railroad, at present about five miles long, but intended to compass the whole city, which runs at the height of the first storey directly up one of the avenues.

If the inhabitants of Aberdeen can imagine a railroad running alongside their first storey windows along one of the thoroughfares of the city, and it is not easy to let one's imagination run thus far, they will then picture the condition of some thousands of house-holders, who have made their sorrows heard, and at least stopped the building of any further extension of the rail; and yet the

means of rapid transit for a widely extended city like New York is a necessity patent to everyone. Why, it will no doubt be asked, cannot the example of London be followed, and under-ground railways used? The answer is, I believe, in the situation of the city, on a level almost with the rivers, which flow on its either hand and prevent tunnelling. Certain it is that for so large a city rapid locomotion is a necessity, and means for its attainment must be found, whether by buying up all the house property along the proposed line of elevated railway, or by some other mode. Accustomed as we are, here in Aberdeen, to cheap cab hire, it will startle your readers to hear that no cabman in New York will allow you to put foot in his cab under one dollar and a half, say six shillings, and that for three hours' driving one must pay upwards of twenty-five shillings. The cabs are all painted black, presenting the appearance of mourning coaches to strangers from this country, but their appointments are in general very good. I understand that it is intended to introduce the British cab system into New York, and was informed that two hundred cabs had been ordered in England. I venture, if the prices are kept at the British standard, to predict a great success for the undertaking, for under the present arrangements ordinary folk who pay common regard to economy cannot use the cabs.

And now one word of the Central Park before we move on from New York—this is the one huge lung of the city, and is of modern design and laying out. It is at the extreme of the city, as at present it exists, five miles from the oldest portion, but reached by tramways from all points. In the New Yorker's imagination, a future exists which will no doubt be some day realised, in which this Central Park shall be what its name betokens, the centre of the city. And one of the jobbing schemes which Tweed and his confederates undertook was the laying out of the land beyond this park in streets and avenues with the blocks as yet unbuilt on. It tickled the citizens' vanity this foreshadowing of the future, and made jobs for the friendly league; but the veil has dropped from the eyes of the tax-payers, and the millions have been spent—the ground is laid out, but alas, no one comes in these hard times to occupy it, and, like other conceits, this one is apt to become small in the light of the taxes asked for. The park is of large extent, and well laid out, the trees have grown well, and their variety is

great, and the undulations, whether natural or artificial, give a great charm and variety to the landscape. An excellent idea, which might be adopted in large parks elsewhere, is an organised system of carriages which start every ten minutes with parties of visitors, to perform the circuit of the park. Those who have no carriage are thereby able to see it in comfort for a small sum.

S A R A T O G A .

My route from New York was by the Hudson River to Albany, the capital of the State, thence by rail to Saratoga; and this performed in one of the day boats, gives one an opportunity of seeing one of the finest bits of river scenery in America—in the world indeed—for no American need travel for the sake of natural scenery out of his own Continent. What a crowd! is one's first impression as you press, or are pressed on board the boat, and wind your way with the throng to one of the decks above. There are three tiers of decks on most of these large steamers; and in the summer months when everyone is on the move, all these decks are crowded. The middle of the decks is taken up almost entirely by a huge saloon, which runs fore and aft the vessel, and which is fitted with the usual gold and velvet furniture in the most gorgeous manner. At either end on all three decks is a part on which you can sit under a canopy in the open air, and at the bow of the boat the best view of the scenery is naturally obtained. Music is sure to be on board, sometimes provided by company, sometimes dependent on the contribution of travellers, and there is a part of the vessel, generally in the lower parts of the ship, and therefore less inviting, where the inner man can be satisfied, though they do not fail to charge you highly for your wants.

The banks of the Hudson must have a more than natural interest for the British visitor. Soon you pass the part at which was enacted that melancholy tragedy of the death of Major Andre as a spy, and the headquarters of the traitor General Arnold. Even the birthplaces of the three farmers who were the English officer's captors are pointed out, and the story has lent a tragic interest to a scene of natural beauty which the sad details have blinded one to for the moment.

West Point, the well-known military school for officers of the United States army, is situated at a most striking point of the river, at which I was reminded of the turns and windings in the Kyles of Bute. It has the repute of giving one of the best military educations of any country, and there seemed from what I heard of the vigorous nature of the tests that this was true. But I shall not detain your readers here, but hurry on to Albany, where, leaving the steamer, we "took to the cars," which is the orthodox expression for getting into the train, and so arrived at Saratoga.

This, the resort of American wealth rather than American fashion, is a sight to be looked at, but surely not to be desired by any lover of his country. Here are gathered in some half-dozen huge hotels several thousands of men and women who have a month or two to spend away from their business, and choose this mode of doing it. The life is this, to speak at random. Out of the 1500 which the "Grand Union Hotel" can accomodate, or the 1000 which the "United States" is prepared for, you are surrounded by a crowd of women who parade the huge piazza which surrounds the house from nine in the morning till eleven at night. Those huge trunks which you may have gazed at with wonder as "somebody's luggage," reveal their mysteries on the backs of their fair owners in startling succession, and I am able to cite an instance of a lady who was noted by a gentleman friend of mine who watched her many reappearances, who changed her costume no less than eleven times in one summer's day. Bands play at the various hotels in the morning and evening, and concerts and balls, races and pic-nics fill up the picture. The men have a resigned look ; if pleased they don't show it but jog along quietly, and let their wives and daughters flaunt their bravery, while they lounge with their cigars or devour the business columns of the papers for news of that which they are eager to return to. The patron saint, if I may say it, of Saratoga, is Morrissey, ex-pugilist, professional gambler, and present legislator for his State. Morrissey's Club is spoken of as one of the Saratoga institutions and sights. It is simply a gambling house for the wealthy idlers, whether legal or not I never succeeded in finding out, but everyone seemed to think that the proprietor was safe from disturbance, as he was a power in the Senate of the State.

Everyone who spoke of him said he played fairly, and this, forsooth, seemed to be sufficient to whitewash the fact that the place was allowed to exist. To him also the place is indebted for the racing which goes on during the summer. Flat-racing is gaining in favour greatly in America apparently, and is getting quite a common amusement.

I have failed thus far to speak of the ostensible reason for the resort to Saratoga, which is to drink the waters. Poor element, it would grieve to think over the excuses which the plea covers! There are many springs, but the one in chief use is the Hathorn, in the centre of the town, which is surrounded from early morn with a crowd of imbibers. The taste is not at all unpleasant, and the efficacy of its constituents is I believe undoubted. From Saratoga, after short stay, I moved on to the wonders of Niagara Falls, and here was enabled to forget, in one of the sublimest sights in the universe, the frivolity and littleness of wealthy idleness. American railways are not to be noted as remarkable either for punctuality or for what is there termed "making connections," that is, enabling branch trains to run to meet main line ones. To reach a place of great resort like Niagara Falls from a centre of fashion like Saratoga, it might be supposed that at least the trains would run through without stoppage. Not so, however; at one hour's distance from the start you are shunted off from the train on to a siding, and for a solid hour and a-half have to meditate on the advantages of American travel. This, be it said, is a point on which Americans are peculiarly sensitive. Suggest the possible advantages of British railroad arrangements—such as the items of speed—[I do not refer, by the way, to our local arrangements, which are perhaps capable of improvement!]—of the division of the carriages into compartments, the careful ballasting of the road, with its result in smoothness of travel, and you are met by the question whether you have travelled to Philadelphia by some one train said to go fifty miles an hour, the only one I heard of capable of going at that rate, or are reproached with the annoyance of our method which prevents your traversing the train from end to end, or are asked to compare the comforts of the saloon car with our own first-class compartments, and any preference for one's own arrangement is attributed to the well-known obstinacy of John Bull.

Let me, however, dwell for a moment on the advantage of the luggage arrangements throughout the States. The plan is, instead of plastering your portmanteau with labels, which, if you travel frequently, become confusing with their variety, to give you a brass label with a number engraved on it and the name of the station from which you go and to which you are bound also engraved. Similar labels are affixed by means of leather straps to each of your packages intended for the van, and you are perfectly certain to find your baggage at the end of the journey, when, by producing the ticket it may be claimed. Before getting to your journey's end you will always be asked by a clerk from the Express Company which acts for the line whether you wish to send your luggage by express, and in that case you hand the brass label to him, receive a receipt on which the number of your articles to be carried is noted, and soon after you reach your hotel will find your luggage arrived without any trouble to yourself. There seems to me a simplicity in this mode which deserves the attention of railway and steamboat people in Great Britain. The usual charge is high, not less than 40 cents—say one-and-sixpence for each article; but the value of money is relatively much smaller than with us, and half that charge would probably remunerate an Express Company in this country.

But here we are at the Falls. As we leave the station, that roar tells us of their neighbourhood; and soon as we drive across the suspension bridge to our hotel on the Canadian side we come face to face with this awe-inspiring torrent, which shows white and misty under the moonlit sky. No more wondrous lullaby than this can be pictured by fertile imagination; but a quarter of a mile from the Falls the hotel occupants cannot, if they would, shut out its ceaseless roar; and I can aver that this brought sleep as deep and restful to my faculties as any which ever fell to my lot. The early morning sun was lighting up the Falls as I opened my window to get the first daylight view of them; and although I feel bound to say that I expected to see greater height of fall—they are 168 feet at the highest point—yet the volume of water in no way disappointed me, and each hour of my stay left its new impression of wonder on my heart. It can hardly be wondered at that at such a point of attraction for visitors crowds of harpies float around. Why it should be necessary to buy any of the trash

which is offered on all hands; why articles of so-called Indian manufacture, and agate bracelets, &c., should be considered indispensable to the right-minded visitor to Niagara, these are points which I shall be glad to hear opinions upon. Certain it is they exist to jar one's feelings and bring away the conviction of petty annoyances from what should be the treasury only of high-souled inspiration. The ordinary visitor's lot was my own, and I can record having viewed the Falls from all or nearly all of the points of view. I confess I was disappointed at not getting more under the Falls. I had expected to walk along a terrace cut out of the rock directly under the main Fall. This is not so. On the Canadian shore you go under a small part of the Fall only, and get a thorough drenching, clad though you are in oilskin suit. On the American side your walk is more extended, but still not under the Falls, as I had been led to expect. But do not let me lead anyone to suppose that I wish to declare my disappointment with this great sight—like the man who is recorded, after a peep down the crater of Vesuvius, to have muttered “There's nothing in it;” my only intention is to note in what it differed from expectation. That it fully came up to my hopes I can truly say, and I feel sure that every one who visits the Falls will come away with the conviction that he has here seen one of the most wonderful works of the Creator.

THE LAKES AND THE ST. LAWRENCE.

From Niagara my course was down Lake Ontario by steamer to Toronto, and thence down the St. Lawrence to Montreal and Quebec. These Canadian lakes, to those accustomed to the loch scenery of Scotland, are too large and sea-like to be very interesting—I speak, of course, of the large lakes on which you are often entirely out of sight of land, and on which the sea rises to a great height. Toronto is finely situated on the lake shore, at some fifty miles from Niagara, and showed in its fine buildings and manufactures that there was plenty of enterprise in its citizens. My stay there was but a short time for changing boats, so I cannot speak of more than a walk down its main streets, where the shops seemed to show most attractive exteriors. Soon we were off for the run down to Montreal, touching, in our fine

steamer, at many points *en route*. At all the points in the Province of Ontario, the signs of comfort and progress seemed visible, and I was told that the whole Province was in a flourishing condition, with the public finance in good order, while in the Lower Province this last item is the contrary, and the general prosperity is very much lower.

Leaving Kingston in the early morn after a night spent in steaming across Lake Ontario, the steamer glides among what are termed the Thousand Isles, although as a matter of fact they are, I believe, actually nearly double that number. Truly a fairy scene this. The slight morning fog which hides the islands and the passage between from view, is dispelled as we steam on, and, lifting from the surface of the lake, shows a channel winding amongst islands of large size showing signs of habitation, and rocky islets with but a scanty furnishing of tree growth. We are on the St. Lawrence at last, and for the next ten hours steam on with occasional halts at towns along the shore, to dispose of passengers. About noon the first rapids are shot amidst the quiet excitement of the passengers, who were in doubt as to the dangers to be encountered, which in inexperienced hands would not be small, but with such men as steer these vessels there is no danger. A bend in the river or a rocky ledge is the usual cause of these rapids, and in one at least a channel has had to be cut out of the solid rock, though usually the river is able to deepen for itself a navigable channel. A peculiar bubble of the water ahead you see on approaching, and almost before you can see where you are the vessel is amongst this mass of bubbling water. The bow points downwards as she passes over the ledge, but is soon water-borne once more, and the longest rapid probably takes no more than half a minute to descend. On return the vessels are obliged to use the canals, cut by the side of each such rapid, to enable them to ascend, and these canals are being greatly enlarged to take up larger vessels, the traffic on the lakes being a yearly expanding one which demands freer outlet.

The Victoria Bridge at Montreal, of which such frequent mention has been made by travellers, spans the river immediately above the city, and is a magnificent work undoubtedly. The ice of the St. Lawrence in spring time comes down with a wonderful force, and therefore it cannot be wondered that massiveness and

solidity are the chief features of the work. Montreal is the commercial city proper of Canada, and shows in its public buildings the enterprise of its people. The timber trade has Quebec for its headquarters. Montreal claims the rest, and grain and cattle are sent from its wharves, at which are landed much of the supplies which Canada trusts to other lands for.

A special line of steamers takes the passenger on from Montreal to Quebec in the course of a night. They are admirably found, and no one who travels in either Canada or the States but must allow that we have much to learn in this manner of travel from them.

Quebec, the historic city, comes into majestic view a short time before the journey's end. Lumber in every direction, and many vessels awaiting their cargoes meet the eye. From the water side you wind through narrow old-fashioned streets at the steepest gradients to the upper town, where stands the principal hotel. It is Sunday morning, and many are returning book in hand from early mass, for Quebec is a stronghold of Roman Catholicism, and notwithstanding a strong Protestant element, may be spoken of as Roman Catholic to the heart. The citadel is a point to which one is first attracted. From there is to be had the finest view of the city and its surroundings, and from its ramparts the town is to be seen far away, and directly beneath your feet. Relic of the French days are the quaint caleches, which are superseded almost entirely by one-horse conveyances of the buggy order. But here and there drive past the older vehicles. The driver balanced on the dash-board, and the gig-body generally filled with a very full cargo of human beings, who on this bright Sunday morning are probably going for a country excursion. One striking feature of Quebec architecture is the sheet-tin roofs which most of its churches are covered with, and which at a distance from sea air is said to last extremely well, and has a bright and sparkling appearance which is very agreeable to the eye. The loss of the British garrison has made Quebec a less important place, socially and commercially, than it used to be. The only troops which inhabit the citadel are some 150 of Canadian militia artillery, and the works are in many places tumbling down for want of a very little timely care. The building, which had been once a convent, and after our own occupation became a barracks, was being pulled down, and the out-buildings

were used for livery stables, the proprietor of which had much to say of regret at losing those who had been such good customers of him and his fellows—in what he termed the “good old” days. Some 3,000 men were stationed here, and the loss of so large a spending element must have been greatly felt. The country around the city is lovely—full of interest alike to the lover of scenery and to the searcher for historical memories. The lovely Falls of Montmorenci, in height greatly exceeding Niagara, though of course not to be compared to them in volume, are reached by a short drive of some half-dozen miles through a richly cultivated country, inhabited by French Canadians. The ruins of a suspension bridge remain to tell the tale of a catastrophe which these falls saw enacted—the very first people who crossed by the bridge on its completion, many years ago, having been killed by its giving way—a fearful fall truly. Close at hand to the falls is a cottage residence which is pointed out as that inhabited by the late Duke of Kent, Her Majesty’s father, for about a couple of years during which he resided in Canada. The Heights of Abraham—scene of General Wolfe’s death—command one of the finest views near Quebec. Strange to say that this splendid point has been taken for a convict prison, which, though a fine building, seems rather unnecessarily thrust into prominence here. The journey by rail from Quebec to Montreal, or the States, must at present be performed by crossing over the St. Lawrence to join the Grand Trunk line. Another line on the Quebec shore is in progress, but is far from completion as yet; it will be welcomed, I fancy, when it is finished, as the trans-shipment of passengers and luggage is a point to be avoided if possible. The neglect of the Colonial Government for the fortifications of Quebec is most strikingly displayed in the gradual ruin into which they are falling, and that simply through the absence of ordinary care. The stone which has fallen from the walls of the citadel seems to be in use for other purposes, as in places where gaps existed, the material which had fallen from them had been taken away.

From Quebec there is a steady shipment of live cattle and horses to this country, and at the present prices on either side this should prove a profitable speculation with freights low as at present. Good useful horses for carriage purposes may be had for £20 to £30, and really first-rate ones for £100 the pair, which

last is an extreme price. I was given to understand that many were sent to Glasgow for tramway use, these of course being of the lower classed descriptions. Exceptionally fast trotters command long prices, particularly in the States, where the dearest ambition of the well-to-do people is to have a pair of fast trotters. The advent of flat racing which has taken place during these latter years, will no doubt cause a different class of horses to be bred. The gait of a horse bred to trot is, when not at high speed, a very ungainly one to the eye of one unused to it, but Americans have great faith in the staying powers of their horses—a point which experts alone can decide.

The traveller who is in a hurry in the States must be fain to pocket his impatience, and need not expect to be free to “trip his mad career.” An hour or two at a wayside station is an ordinary incident, if you wander from the main lines of the route; indeed, even on them there are frequently trying delays. Boston is reached from Quebec by rail, in a journey lasting about twenty hours.

BOSTON AND BACK TO NEW YORK— FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

At close of last portion of these notes, a statement was made that Boston is reached from Quebec by rail in a journey lasting about twenty hours. That journey might be reduced by two hours by a simple rearrangement of the time-bills, not to mention the possibility of quicker travel. The deliberation of the Great North of Scotland Railway had prepared one in part for slow travel, but here the frequent stations offer some excuse. There the distances are great, and there seems no reason for the slowness.

Boston is a wonderful city. There is an air of solidity about it, of wealth well bestowed, of cultivated taste, which no other city on the American Continent that I have seen can display. The great fire which, but a few years ago, reduced the whole of the business part to ashes, has been effaced, and a new quarter erected on a splendid scale. On the extension of the city, where now stand many new houses and splendid churches, less than ten years

ago was a marsh and stream, and fish were caught ; and I thought, as I looked at these reclamations, of the joy which our Harbour Commissioners would display if some wealthy inhabitant of the city should rule that henceforth the reclaimed ground should be the site for his newly-planned mansion, or that one of the fashionable congregations had decided on rebuilding their church on that ground.

The domestic life in Boston links itself to English manners and customs more than in other American towns—in no other can be seen the detached system of building with garden surroundings, such as all our larger towns can show in their vicinity. Cambridge, which, I believe, is incorporated as a city in itself, is yet but a part of its larger neighbour Boston, and in this charming part stands the University of Harvard, silent, as I saw it, and destitute of the architectural graces with which our English Universities are gifted, but having the air of scholarly seclusion which comports with the haunts of learning.

The poet Longfellow's residence is pointed out near the College buildings, and the poet's house has been tenanted by no less distinguished a man than General Washington himself, who occupied it at the time he commanded the American forces in the neighbourhood.

The memory of "Bunker's Hill" is one which good Americans cherish dearly, and the visitor to Boston should task his wind and his knee joints in the ascent of the somewhat toilsome stairs of the monument. Arrived at the top you gain a view of the city of Boston and its surroundings, which amply repays the trouble. This huge obelisk stands on the site of the battle, which, though it can hardly be credited fairly with the term considering the smallness of the forces engaged on either side, was yet the critical trial for the American rebel force who, up to then, had not shown whether they could stand against the regular British troops. This they showed they could do, and Washington is said to have declared after this success that all must go well, and the future of the Republic be assured. But long ere this my readers have wearied of my story, and will be ready to return to New York *en retour* to their native land. This is most comfortably done by what is called the Fall River Route, which involves forty miles of train journey, and then by steamer a night passage to New York. It is

curious to see as one of the special inducements of the route, advertisements that "this is the only railroad in the United States on which there are carriages after the European model," and you find a train on which may be tried either Pullman cars, ordinary American travelling cars, or those of the model we are used to in this country, and for which I declare my attachment—although there is a good deal to be said for the capability of moving about in the large cars which are usual in the States. The drawing-room cars, for which you pay an extra fee, are comfortable enough, but I am free to own that I prefer the British railways when the compartment is not too full, and there is space to stretch out.

But here we are alongside the steamer "Bristol," which is to take a very full tale of passengers to New York. You book your cabin before leaving Boston, and, are provided with a ticket which is numbered, that is exchanged in the train by a steward, who hands you the key of your cabin, so that no time is lost, and you may walk direct to it on arrival on board. What a marvel of elaborate decoration the steamer presents—lighted with gas throughout. The huge saloon, in which through the evening plays a most excellent band, runs the entire length of the vessel, and is furnished magnificently. Below there is abundant preparation for the cravings of hunger. At each extremity groups of passengers sit in the open air watching the changing scene as daylight deepens into darkness. A new bevy of passengers is taken on board at fashionable Newport, and through the night the steamer speeds at great rate, arriving in New York by early morning. And here I bid my readers adieu, with the advice to all who can afford to travel and like the change, to take America into their plan, and to spend if possible three months, rather than three weeks, in seeing the country. I was unable to go west, and that alone shows how little I have seen of the States. There may be seen the natural resources of America, and in the great iron districts may be gathered some idea of the future before this American nation, if they but hang together and do not let their petty jealousies stand in the way of their progress.

The irksomeness of the Protectionist tariff is very commonly exclaimed against, but I saw little sign of any feeling strong enough to overturn the present financial regime. The false feeling

of patriotic pride prevents those who suffer the most from giving effect to their feelings. In this country we know from our own experience what a long fight the introduction of Free Trade cost us, and there the facts which stared us clearly in the face are not likely soon to come to the front, though of late years there has been much pauperism and distress in the great American cities. The pure Americans feel themselves at great disadvantage by the ease with which naturalised citizens obtain their right of voting, and after a residence of only two years are in possession of all the rights of American citizenship. As they are in the main of the lower class, their appreciation of their privileges, particularly in the matter of voting, is not very keen, and they are led by men of their own kind, who are in the pay of the politicians of either party. Thus the votes of the people who have the chief stake in the country are swamped by those who are but of yesterday, and have no settled convictions. While this lasts the best men will not engage in political life. The last remark I will make is on the feeling which I found so general among Americans at this date of friendliness to Great Britain. A settled idea amongst them is that this country is bound to be engaged in a life-and-death struggle before very long; and no American that I talked with but declared that if she was hardly pressed the United States would be determined to help her. Of course one accepts these friendly speeches "*cum grano salis*," but I was totally unprepared to find them so general, and to hear them uttered with such apparent sincerity. I think we may attribute this cordiality in great part to the "Alabama settlement," which seems to have really attained its object; and perhaps in part to the conviction that America herself has troubles enough at home, and will be glad of the sympathy of all English-speaking races. At a "serenade" to a returned Senator who had been travelling in Europe, when he began to speak of England and her institutions there was a voice from the crowd, "Treat her well!" which was followed by a general cheer. This I heard myself, as I was at the time staying in the hotel before which the crowd was collected; and I can truly say it was a pleasant sound to British ears, accustomed to hear of the jealousy of the Mother Country, which Americans are supposed to show. The Senator in question had bitter things to say on the "tubbing" arrangements in this country, but that was the extent

of his objection, as far as I could gather, and I see no reason to object to each nation showing a preference for its own methods in lavatory processes.

And now let me close this hasty sketch of a three weeks' ramble in the United States with a few, very few, remarks on what I may term the chief connecting link between that country and ourselves. I speak of that great steam-shipping service which has bridged the Atlantic for us and for our American cousins more particularly; for when speaking of extensive travel, who can deny that Americans are the very pioneers of travel, and think of distance merely as so much space to be sooner or later covered by their migratory instinct? As I write, the remembrance of a lady flashes across my memory, who remarked in the course of conversation that she had gone across to England for a few months with her children because her house was not quite ready for her, and she thought she might as well spend the time that way as any other. She made no more of it than a Londoner going down to Brighton for a week, and this is the accepted faith of all Americans, who are restless till they have seen Europe, and in the course of their wanderings manage to spend much of their time in this kingdom and delight the hearts of hotel-keepers and others who live by the travelling public.

Of the great Atlantic passenger lines of steamers, by seniority and by merit, the Cunard Company stands first. By this company's steamer "Scythia" it was my good fortune to travel on return to England, and of the comfort and pleasure of the voyage by such a craft I cannot say too much. Admirable discipline, that all-important element for the comfort as for the safety of those who travel by sea; great courtesy from officers and crew; everything that can be desired in the matters of food and lodgement—all these are to be obtained, I can aver from actual experience, in the steamers of the Cunard Line. The only troubles to be seen or heard of were those inseparable, alas, from the fickle ocean which bore us on its bosom, and for many of my fellow-travellers said bosom proved far too fluttering and palpitatory a one for their comfort. The sorrows which the "deck steward" of one of these steamers must be the recipient of in the course of a year would fill a book of far greater volume than the ordinary novel, and which, I will venture to say, would be infinitely more

entertaining. In the anguish of *mal de mer*, when husband fails his wife and parents their dearest child, how eagerly does the woebegone sufferer hail the sight of this official, ever at hand and ever full of sympathy. Surely if ever gratuity is earned by any of those who serve us this is a deserving case, and were the whole Cunard Company to command me as passenger to desist from giving my votive offering at the close of the voyage to him I would defy them, and strive in some sort to show my sense of gratitude for favours received. In the "Scythia" we had not what is called a full number of passengers, and yet there were varieties of character sufficient for the student of human nature. It would ill become me, who enjoyed the charms of congenial companionship, to break the bonds of privacy and speak of individuals; but this much I may say, that friendships thus hastily formed on the sea are not lightly thrown aside and linger in pleasant memory for many a long day. The narrowness of national feeling broadens into sympathy with the feelings of foreigners, and Americans are eager to remember not the differences but the ties with the mother country. But Queenstown is passed and Liverpool sighted, and here I say adieu!

R. H. B.



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 113 497 8

